

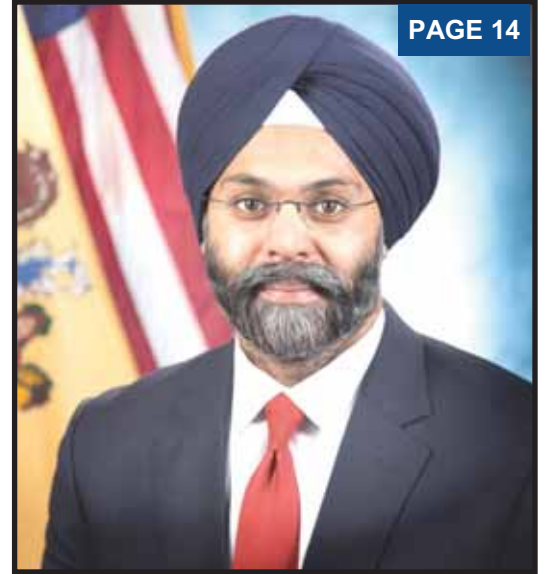
**BREAKING NEWS: BILL COSBY
RELEASED FROM PRISON**

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**GURBIR GREWAL
STEPPING DOWN
AS NEW JERSEY
ATTORNEY GENERAL**

*Grewal Set to Take Job with
SEC as Enforcement Director*



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AFTERMATH OF CONDO COLLAPSE GROWS



The wreckage of the sea facing section of the Champlain Towers

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ANGER STEWS OVER LATE ARRIVING VOTING MACHINES



By Walter Elliott

NEWARK - "What if they held an election day - and there were no voting machines at your polling station?" was a theoretical question-turned reality for voters in parts of Newark June 8.

33 voting machines arrived after their stations opened for the party primaries 6 a.m. that Tuesday at several locations in the

Central, South and West wards. Several of those 23 stations did not open until after the electronic machines had arrived later that morning.

Ryan P. Haygood, for example, went to his neighborhood station to cast his vote at 7:30 a.m. - 90 minutes after the polls' statewide opening. Haygood, however, found no machines

(Continued on page 3)

**EAST ORANGE
MOURNS
FORMER
COUNCILWOMAN
SHARON FIELDS**



PAGE 11



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Turn
To
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16



Editorial
Dhiren Shah
 Editor-In-Chief

Hello Readers,

Bill Cosby, once the heart-throb of almost everyone in the United States and the world with his Cosby Show, has been set free by the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania. It was a prosecutorial mistake.

According to NBC News: "The court said that a prosecutor's decision not to charge Cosby, 83, opened the door for him to speak freely in a lawsuit against him and that testimony was key in his conviction years later by another prosecutor. Cosby was convicted in 2018 of drugging and sexually assaulting a woman in 2004 and was serving a three- to 10-year sentence.

He has served two years of the sentence. The state Supreme Court said Cosby cannot be retried on the same charges."

Many loved Bill Cosby. I had an opportunity to see him personally when he visited Orange, NJ for the grand opening of a restaurant. Cosby has visited Essex County many times and he has supported many local programs as well.

New York City's Democratic Party primary mayoral election is key for the future of the city. Crime is going up, and many residents are moving out from the city and trying to live in suburban communities of New Jersey, New York and Connecticut. Andrew Yang, once the front runner, has been moved to fourth place now. It is becoming a very interesting and a close race.

According to Fox News; "Eric Adams' lead in the race for the Democratic nomination for mayor of New York City nar-

rowed to just over two points, according to preliminary tabulations from the Board of Elections in Round 11 of ranked-choice voting, but the Brooklyn Borough president and former police chief is raising some questions. Adams now leads the primary with 51.1% of the vote barely edging out former sanitation commissioner Kathryn Garcia, who has 48.9% of the vote, with the other candidates now eliminated. Adams leads Garcia by 16,000 votes, though 124,000 absentee ballots have not yet been counted, meaning the race is far from over. But Adams said that the vote total on Tuesday was 100,000 more than the total counted on election night. The NYC Board of Elections acknowledged a 'discrepancy' in Tuesday's ranked choice voting count."

That "discrepancy" was 135,000 test votes being included in the tally. Now, they'll have

to recount everything. Who knows who leads the race now?

Four more bodies were found on June 30 in the Florida condo collapse. So far, the cause of the condo collapse has been not determined. About 150 people are still missing, and officials are trying hard to remove the debris to find the remainder of the missing persons.

Despite there being no clear cause found yet, Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm tried to blame climate control for the cause of the collapse. This kind of statement seems like it was made to protect the builders and the inspectors who previously inspected the building. She is trying to divert people's minds from a manmade cause to a natural cause.

Have a wonderful week.

I'll talk to you next week.

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WEATHER FOR THE WEEK

<u>THURSDAY</u>	<u>FRIDAY</u>	<u>SATURDAY</u>	<u>SUNDAY</u>	<u>MONDAY</u>	<u>TUESDAY</u>	<u>WEDNESDAY</u>
PM T-Storms	Rain	More Rain	Scattered T-Storms	Partly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy	Isolated T-Storms
HI 87 	HI 79 	HI 72 	HI 80 	HI 87 	HI 96 	HI 90 
LO 71 	LO 64 	LO 63 	LO 64 	LO 70 	LO 73 	LO 70 

ESSEX COUNTY COLLEGE PROGRAM ALLOWS HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS TO EARN DUAL DEGREES

The Dual Enrollment program at Essex County College allows pre-college students to take college for-credit classes while still attending their local high schools. This year, 21 Newark Tech students were recognized for earning their Associate degree during ECC's Virtual Commencement on June 4, 2021.

One of these students from Newark, Tatyanna Nelums, is a true overachiever. In addition to earning her Associate degree, she also had the honor of serving as Newark Tech's Valedictorian this year.

"Going to college while attending high school was a wonderful opportunity for me and definitely worth the extra work," the 17-year-old said, who will be heading to Syracuse University this fall to major in Aerospace Engineering. To make it work, Tatyanna said it was a matter of budgeting her time after she decided to enroll in the ECC program as a high school freshman.

"Our program prepares these high school students for college by giving them additional classes each year," said Dr. Elvy Vieira, Dean of Community, Continuing Education & Workforce Development at ECC. Dr. Vieira explained that the students receive the necessary tutoring to keep them



Tatyanna Nelums (left) is congratulated by Dr. Elvy Vieira, Essex County College Dean of Community, Continuing Education & Workforce Development

on track. The courses are taught by ECC faculty and College adjunct instructors.

Newark Tech Principal Carmen Morales has been very impressed by Tatyanna. "She is bright, articulate, and unafraid to push boundaries, thinks outside the box, and puts in the hard work that is needed to achieve the goals she sets. Her strong work ethic, competitive nature, and ability to work as a team player is what has led Tatyanna to this level of success in her academic career. There is no doubt that she will continue to soar and achieve many great things," Principal Morales stated.

In addition to her College courses during

the regular school year, Tatyanna took several ECC courses over each summer in the program, including the College Success Seminar and history classes.

Interestingly, Tatyanna also served as class Valedictorian in both elementary and middle school.

On her career choice, Tatyanna said, "I've always been interested in science. When I learned about NASA and space exploration, that really sparked by interest in science and aerospace."

She has received a full tuition scholarship to attend Syracuse. Since she has earned her Associate degree at ECC, Tatyanna will be on course to complete her Bachelor's requirements early.

Tatyanna is not resting on her laurels and taking the Summer off. Before starting at Syracuse on August 24, she will spend four weeks in Italy through the Council on International Education Exchange (CIEE) program. "I want to learn about the culture of Italy and travel through the country," she said. "I know it will be a great experience."

"I'm confident Tatyanna is well on her way toward doing great things. All of us at Essex County College are extremely proud of all our high school graduates from the Dual Enrollment Program. I wish all of the students continued success," said ECC Interim President Dr. Augustine A. Boakye.

ANGER STEWS OVER

LATE ARRIVING

VOTING MACHINES

(Continued from page 1)

there.

"I was told to return later and (was) not offered a provisional ballot until I proactively requested one," said Haygood afterward. "Unfortunately, this isn't the first time I've encountered voting obstacles in Newark Running elections is a massive endeavor - but we must do better."

Haygood, a person others should not anger, went to his downtown office and started making phone calls. The New Jersey Institute for Social Justice president soon learned the extent of the late deliveries.

"Voters in much of the rest of Essex County don't encounter these issues but voters in Newark - the state's largest city and a majority Black city - regularly do," said Haygood June 11. "The unfortunate reality is that the election issues in Essex County are disproportionately felt by Black and Brown voters in Newark."

Haygood said that he knew of polling stations in Newark opening late during Nov. 2's Presidential and General Election.

This is not the first time the NJISJ has been tackling election issues. Haygood and company had most recently advocated for the end of designing election ballots along party lines. They joined in People's Organization for Progress, RWDSU Local 108 and other community groups in celebrating Juneteenth - and calling for reparations.

Haygood and NJISJ Democracy and Justice Program Director Henal Patel sent a June 11 open letter to Essex County Superintendent of Elections Patricia Spagno calling for an investigation on how and why voting machines in Newark arrived late and/or polling stations opening after 6 a.m.

Haygood and Patel's letter to Spagno was co-signed by 19 other organizations, from Rutgers' Abbott Leadership Institute and ACLU-NJ to Our Revolution Essex and Project Ready. The letter included Spagno to RSVP.

The Essex County Board of Elections normally has its contracted moving company deliver voting machines to all 22 municipalities on or before the Friday ahead of the following Tuesday election. A local media outlet found, for the June 8 primaries, that the mover was still delivering machines on June 7.

Brantley Brothers Moving & Storage, who was contracted for June primary ma-

chine deliveries, had picked up the county's machines from the latter's Belleville warehouse.

The company's trucks, this time, served the most distant municipalities first and worked their way back to Newark. They were left with 33 machines Monday night and resumed their deliveries before 6 a.m. Tuesday.

Brantley Brothers owner Isaac King, on June 11, said that his employees found some of those polling stations still closed 6 a.m. June 8. King added that Spagno's office furnished a polling station contact list that had some incorrect information.

Brantley Brothers, founded in 1967, is based out of the former Sears Roebuck department store building in the South Ward. It is one of the largest Black-owned moving and storage companies in the U.S.

The media outlet found that Spagno knew about the behind-schedule deliveries on June 5. Spagno, of West Orange, succeeded Linda von Nessi as election superintendent earlier this year.

Spagno, in her June 16 response to Haygood and Patel, told them that she is taking the matter seriously and is working to address the problem.



UNITED STATES

Aftermath of Condo Collapse Grows

Questions still abound after a condominium complex in Florida suddenly collapsed, putting hundreds at risk.

On the night of June 24, the seaside section of the Champlain Towers in Surfside, Florida, a suburb of Miami, collapsed, sending 12 stories of concrete and steel crashing to the ground. As of this posting, at least 16 people are confirmed dead, with close to 150 missing. In one good turn of fortune, around 135 have been accounted for.

According to reports, the building was under examination for its 40-year safety recertification. Research by Florida International University showed that the building had been sinking since the 1990s. In 2018, an inspection of the pool deck showed a “major error” in its construction.

Surfside Mayor Charles Burkett has said that he would like the north portion of the Champlain Towers to be temporarily evacuated to check the building’s structural integrity and to ensure the safety of the residents there.

“We were devastated to hear of the catastrophic Champlain Towers building collapse in Surfside. Our hearts go out to the victims and their families. We are thankful for the first responders who are working around the clock in rescue efforts,” the Miami Heat posted on Twitter.

The tragedy was so severe that President Biden declared a formal state of emergency, and ordered Federal assistance to supplement State and local response efforts due to the emergency conditions resulting from the Surfside Building Collapse beginning on June 24, 2021, and

continuing.

The President’s action authorizes the Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), to coordinate all disaster relief efforts which have the purpose of alleviating the hardship and suffering caused by the emergency on the local population, and to provide appropriate assistance for required emergency measures, authorized under Title V of the Stafford Act, to save lives and to protect property and public health and safety, and to lessen or avert the threat of a catastrophe in Miami-Dade County.

Specifically, FEMA is authorized to identify, mobilize, and provide at its discretion, equipment and resources necessary to alleviate the impacts of the emergency.

“I am grateful for the heroic first responders, search and rescue teams, and all FEMA, state, county, local, and volunteer personnel who are working around the clock to try to save lives and for those who are dedicated to helping survivors with many needs, including temporary housing,” Biden said in a statement. “We will continue to coordinate closely with officials on the ground throughout this terrible ordeal and my administration is ready to provide any support or assistance that is needed.

“This is an unimaginably difficult time for the families enduring this tragedy. For those who are waiting in anguish for word of their loved ones as search and rescue efforts continue in the aftermath of this catastrophic incident, the pain of the uncertainty is an added, heart-breaking burden. My heart goes out to every single person suffering during this awful moment.”

Bill Cosby Released From Prison

A stunning decision from Pennsylvania’s Supreme Court has led to a fallen star getting his freedom.

On June 30, the court ruled that Bill Cosby should be re-

leased from prison immediately. The reasoning for the ruling is that there was an agreement between Montgomery County District Attorney Bruce Castor and Cosby that he would never be prosecuted for his remarks during a deposition in the Andrea Constand case. However, when another prosecutor decided to try Cosby on the matter later - where he was found guilty and sentenced to three to 10 years in prison in 2018 - the Court decided that this violated Cosby’s Fifth Amendment rights, and therefore the entire conviction has been thrown out. Additionally, Cosby will likely never be tried for the matter again.

As of this posting, there has been no response from any of Cosby’s alleged victims. He left the facility at 2:30 pm that same day.

Meanwhile, former “Smallville” actress Allison Mack was sentenced to three years for her role in the NXIVM case. Mack received less than the 17-year possible sentence due to her cooperation against cult founder Keith Raniere, who was sentenced to over 100 years in prison last year.

EUROPE

Celebrating LGBT People

On June 29, the Prime Minister hosted a reception in the garden of 10 Downing Street to mark Pride Month 2021 and to celebrate the contribution of LGBT people from across the UK.

The reception reflected on the government’s work so far to tackle LGBT injustice and looked ahead to June 2022 when the UK will host ‘Safe To be Me: A Global Equality Conference.’

The PM said the UK’s first ever global LGBT conference will be about ‘kindness, tolerance and openness’ and will look at what more can be done to promote LGBT equality around the world.

Speaking at the Downing Street Pride reception, planned in partnership with the GREAT

campaign, the PM said he was proud to live in one of the most open and tolerant countries in the world and that LGBT equality was a key economic asset of the UK. He said that “whomever you love, however you identify, whether you are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or trans - I want this government to have your back.”

The event in the garden of Downing Street was attended by LGBT people whose lives have been positively impacted by the work of the UK Government, as well as those representing key organizations working on LGBT issues in the UK and internationally.

This included Chris McNaghten and Jon Swan – one of the first same-sex couples to get married in Northern Ireland after legislation came into effect making it legal last year.

The PM congratulated them both and said he was proud same-sex marriage was now legal in all parts of the UK.

Johnson also met with Caroline Paige, the first openly transgender Officer in the British Armed Forces. They discussed the work being done to make the British Armed Forces more inclusive and praised the Ministry of Defense announcement earlier this year which allowed former Armed Forces personnel who were dismissed from service on the basis of their sexuality to apply to have their medals restored.

The PM said he was ‘hugely proud of our country’s record on LGBT issues’ but warned that ‘we must not rest on our laurels’. He recognized that discrimination still exists and that sadly LGBT people are still victims of disgraceful hate crimes. He met with Joshua Ormrod who was attacked as he left a Liverpool nightclub with friends earlier this month. The PM condemned the shocking attack and commended Joshua’s bravery. He told the reception the government was committed to doing all it could to make our country a safe place for everyone.

As well as changes to the

(Continued on page 10)

GOVERNOR MURPHY SIGNS FISCAL YEAR 2022 BUDGET INTO LAW

WOODBIDGE - Governor Phil Murphy signed the Fiscal Year 2022 (FY 2022) Appropriations Act into law June 29, working in partnership with the Legislature to develop a budget that meets the State's current and future obligations, makes New Jersey more affordable for working and middle-class families, provides record investments in education, supports an inclusive pandemic recovery, and invests in small businesses and long-term economic growth.

"This year's budget represents the culmination of a four-year journey to fix many longstanding problems in New Jersey," said Governor Murphy. "This is a budget that invests in our middle-class and working families - supporting both those building their families and careers and those who are living out their richly-deserved retirements. It also puts a world-class education within reach for all while tackling our age-old property tax problem - ensuring a

stronger, fairer, and healthier future for the generation born and reared in the shadow of an unprecedented pandemic."

"Together, we are providing broad and equitable pre-K through higher education opportunities for more of our students, making sure every child in New Jersey has health care, delivering substantial tax relief to working and middle-class families, investing real dollars to make the dream of homeownership an affordable reality, helping seniors remain in their communities long into their golden years, and providing hundreds of millions in relief for small businesses," continued Governor Murphy.

"This budget also places a premium on fiscal responsibility - making good on our promise to public employees by providing above and beyond the full pension payment for the first time in a quarter of a century, responsibly setting aside funds to repay debt, and making New Jersey

more resilient to weather future health emergencies."

The Governor was joined by Senate President Sweeney, Speaker Coughlin, Lieutenant Governor Oliver, State Treasurer Muoio, Senate Budget Chair Sarlo, Assembly Budget Chair Pintor Marin, and Woodbridge Mayor John McCormac at Ross Street School #11 in Woodbridge where he signed the Appropriations Act to highlight its unprecedented investment in public education. As promised, Governor Murphy reversed years of chronic underfunding of public education, increasing direct pre-K through grade 12 spending statewide by nearly \$1.5 billion over the last four years and putting New Jersey on the path to fully funding the school funding formula that has been upheld as constitutional.

The FY 2022 budget increases formula aid by nearly \$750 million and Woodbridge is one of hundreds of school districts that have benefitted from the

Governor's multi-year increase in funding. The district will receive \$18 million in additional school funding next year through this budget, more than twice what it was in FY 2018. The budget also invests an additional \$50 million in pre-K, including \$26 million for new programs, and provides an additional \$125 million for Extraordinary Special Education Aid, a priority of the Senate President.

"This fiscal year budget shows our shared values of dignity and respect for human life in the face of adversity and collective commitment to making New Jersey the best place to live, work, be educated, and retire in the nation," said Lt. Governor Sheila Oliver, who serves as Commissioner of the Department of Community Affairs. "We are paying down the state's long-ignored obligations while continuing to focus on building a strong middle class and robust economy that everyone can par-

(Continued on page 13)

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Finance At Your Fingertips



Moses Ayiku, Jr. MBA OP/ED

Increasing Your Income - Part 4

We have been looking at different ways to increase one's income in the past few weeks. This week we shall refocus on starting a business. The whole point about increasing one's income is to finance the lifestyle that one would want. An increased income would allow you to save more and to invest more.

When it comes to investments, the magic phrase is, "proceed with caution." There are so many investment options out there. Each comes with its own costs and benefits. It is important to research all you can about any investment before deciding to put money in that option.

Starting a business is a way to increase one's income. The big thing here is that it will require a significant amount of time. It may also require some capital. Banks typically do not lend money to start-ups. However, depending on your credit score as well as the relationship that you have with your bankers, this is an option that you can explore. Research shows that most new businesses are funded by the savings of owners as well as money from friends and family. If banks were pouring money into startups, this would not be the case.

An option for new business owners is to consider buying a

franchise or acquiring an existing business. Unfortunately, this option is full of many risks and pitfalls. A lot of people are losing money trying this option. One reason for this is that recognizing that many people respect franchises, several dubious entities have set up franchise opportunities that they use to defraud unsuspecting investors. I have met several of such victims and it has been a harrowing experience trying to make a profit out of a business that they have invested a lot of money but is basically not a profitable opportunity.

Again, the magic word is research. Those who invest in dubious businesses, do not do their homework. Even when they do their homework, the degree of difficulty in properly assessing such investments is at times quite high and makes it easy for one to be scammed. One may need to hire a professional to assist. Such professionals do not come cheap. All this leads to an increased cost of entering the business. Remember though, investing in researching a firm is a sunk cost. One could invest tons of money into researching many firms and get absolutely nothing out of it. That is the simple reality. All in all, it is a tricky field and one as usual must be very cautious.

The other option is to start a new business from the ground up. What are you going to invest in? It is important to look at several things before deciding on a particular area to invest in. Every single day people spend money. We spend money on food, shelter, clothing and entertainment.

Looking at any of these areas is a good option. Whatever you decide on, make sure to dig deeper. It is important to understand the area that you are about to take a risk on. Ask questions and seek the answers.

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ESSEX COUNTY COVID-19 CASE TALLY

Weekly Statistics from June 23 - June 30, 2021

Municipality	6-23-2021	Deaths	6-30-2021	Deaths
Belleville	5671	115	5670	115
Bloomfield	5341	122	5357	123
Caldwell	623	16	623	16
Cedar Grove	1550	120	1550	120
East Orange	7162	313	7166	313
Essex Fells	191	2	191	2
Fairfield	886	31	885	31
Glen Ridge	390	13	391	13
Irvington	4724	233	4731	233
Livingston	1831	88	1835	89
Maplewood	1308	36	1312	36
Millburn	825	10	824	10
Montclair	2274	72	2278	72
Newark	36961	1005	36953	1007
North Caldwell	496	6	496	6
Nutley	3038	66	3040	66
Orange	3554	133	3559	136
Roseland	477	16	478	16
South Orange	864	16	863	16
Verona	996	18	994	18
West Caldwell	1058	53	1059	53
West Orange	4586	231	4586	231
Total	84806	2715	84841	2722

OTHER COVID-19 TALLIES (As of June 30, 2021)

NJ: 892,983 cases / 23,754 deaths (Plus 2,703 probable)

United States (approx.): 33.66 Million / 604,700 deaths

Worldwide (approx.): 182 Million / 3.94 Million deaths

Barring any emergencies, NJ Gov. Murphy announced that masks will not be required in the 2021-22 school year.

product? Who are the current suppliers of the product? What is the typical profit margin? Who are the key competitors? What makes them so successful as suppliers? What are the keys to success in that business or

industry? What types of licenses are required and how much do they cost? Does one need employees or can one run the business alone for a while? These and many other questions must

(Continued on page 7)

Letter to the Editor

THE HISTORY OF THE CLENCH FIST SLOGAN & SALUTATION

By Na'im Fakradeen Shabazz
a.k.a. Reginald Prather

The "Clench Fist" salutation & mantra, historically, was not a slogan symbolizing "Black Power!" The salutation, originally was a slogan symbolizing, the unity of the American "Working Class" i.e. The Proletarian Class and the Labor Union Movement of the American "Working Class." The meaning of the gesture was, "POWER TO THE PEOPLE!"

As the first social group to ever exhibit this salutation and mantra, they raised their "Clenched Fist" (to the American Power Structure, opposing the Labor Union Movement) while invoking the mantra "POWER TO THE PEOPLE!" And thereby, calling Govern-

ment's attention to the expression in the Constitution, citing, "a government for the people, by the people." That "WE THE PEOPLE" means "POWER TO THE PEOPLE! To imply that always, there is more power in the people, than there are people in power.

Subsequent to the events of the 1968 OLYMPIC GAMES, that the original Meaning of the salutation in question, erroneously came to mean "Black Power!" When athletes TOMMIE SMITH & JOHN CARLOS, whom during their winner's celebration: in a show of Black solidarity with the Black Power Movement of the 1960s, with their hand covered with a black glove, they, in a salute fashion, raised the clenched Fist. And there afterward, the salutation and its mantra, was symbolized to mean just that.

However, Dr. Angela Davis & The Black Panther Party, re-

FINANCE (Continued from page 6)

be asked and answered before you make a decision to invest your hard earned money into any business.

Years ago, a businessman came to my office seeking guidance concerning an investment. The businessman informed me that he went to Germany and bought container loads of A4 paper (the typical copy paper size found in most offices etc. in copiers and printers). When I asked what he needed me for, he explained that he had heard that there was money in paper and decided to invest without doing the necessary research.

However, upon purchasing the paper, he found out that the paper he bought for \$20 a box

was being sold on the open market for \$10 per box. In other words, the businessman was staring at losing over 50% of his investment! The lack of research led to this most unfortunate situation.

Please do the research and be extra careful before you invest. Many will tell you almost anything that you want to hear to take your money. Do not fall for the traps and sweet words.

Please feel free to share with me your questions and experiences on stocks and investments. I will do my best to respond, and, in some cases, I will write on some of these questions.

Your questions and comments can be sent to localtalk-news@gmail.com.

turned it, to its original "Political" Definition. Their Salute, with the raising of the clenched fist, was to always, simultaneously, invoke the mantra

"POWER TO THE PEOPLE!"
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The Doctor Is In



Dr. Adil Manzoor OP/ED

Mask Mandate In Schools

The Masks have become so part of our lives; it is very understandable that many people still wear them around even after being fully vaccinated, and the CDC essentially removing the mask mandate for vaccinated individuals. In fact, according to the CDC regulations, there are instances where even unvaccinated people don't have to wear masks.

Masks are one of the souvenirs the coronavirus brought when it visited planet earth in 2019. And mask-wearing has persisted ever since then. After months and months of waiting, it seems people are finally ready to

move on and return to "the old normal," if that even exists anymore.

The journey of mask-wearing has been weird, to say the least. First, it was met with rejection, which degenerated into reluctance, before moving into the stage of majority acceptance. Then came politicization. Now that I think of it, I really don't get how people thought mask-wearing was a political statement. It is literally a mask - just a piece of fabric used to protect ourselves from a deadly virus. Nothing more.

What am I driving at? While the mask mandate was imposed to protect us and limit the spread of the virus, it has gone through quite a lot, with many not fully accepting it. So it came as very little surprise to me the joy that accompanied the removal of the mask mandate in virtually all states of the country, particularly from the same set of people that think the vaccine is harmful and dangerous.

You might already know my opinion on the removal of the mask mandate for all. But to be perfectly clear, I don't like it one bit. Mask-wearing should be one of the last measures we remove, not one of the first. Seriously, I get that the vaccination rate is going up, and the cases we are recording are drastically falling, but we are still recording cases.

People are dying. New strains are still rearing their heads. We still don't have enough people vaccinated to even start thinking of herd immunity. So why exactly should the mask mandate be removed?

Many schools already have, and many more will resume operations as normal. I mean, resume into physical classes. I am hoping that schools still have a bit of respect for the virus and require masks.

I understand this will be more difficult to achieve with elementary and lower-level schools, but the focus should still be on keeping the masks, not removing them. I don't think there is any excuse I can accept for higher-level schools and institutions not to enforce mask-wearing. I'm not getting my hopes too high, though, because knowing America, they'll probably come up with something, and many will just ride along.

We all need to understand that the war is not won yet. The finish line is still a long way out, although, to our credit, we are moving very fast towards it. I cannot bear to imagine what will happen if another more transmissible and deadlier strain of this virus emerges - one that is resistant to the current vaccines we have.

I'm sure no one wants this, which is why we have to keep all



hands on deck for as long as we need to, at least till when viable herd immunity discussions start surfacing.

We have worn a mask for about 15 months; we can wear it for a couple more. Get vaccinated. Stay Safe.

This article was written by Dr. Adil Manzoor DO, a Board Certified Internist & Board Eligible Pediatrician, who works as a Hospitalist, and Emergency Room Physician. He is also the current President of Garden State Street Medicine, a non-profit organization whose sole purpose is to provide free preventive and acute urgent care services for the homeless. He is also the co-founder of his own unique medical practice Mobile Medicine NJ.

WORLD NEWS

(Continued from page 4)

laws on same-sex marriage in Northern Ireland and the rightful return of medals to those dismissed from service due to their sexuality, some of the government's wider work on LGBT rights includes a commitment to bringing forward a ban on conversion therapy, changing blood donation rules to allow men who have sex with men the ability to donate blood if they are in a long-term relationship, and making the preventative HIV treatment PrEP routinely available across England as part of the govern-

ment's aim to end HIV transmission by 2030.

The event was also attended by the Minister for Equalities Kemi Badenoch and the PM's Special Envoy on LGBT Rights Nick Herbert.

CANADA

Heatwave Sizzles Canada

A "pressure-cooker" heatwave that's broken several temperature records in a matter of hours in the US northwest and western Canada is being mirrored across large parts of the northern hemisphere, the World

Meteorological Organization (WMO) said on June 29.

"An exceptional and dangerous heatwave is breaking in northwestern United States of America and western Canada; this is obviously a part of the world which is more accustomed to cool weather," said Clare Nullis, spokesperson for the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). "Temperatures are likely to reach as high as 45C by day for perhaps five or more days; so that's a very long spell, with extremely warm nights in between."

According to the UN agency, in 2018, vulnerable over-65s

faced a record 220 million more "heatwave exposures" than between the 1986 and 2005 average.

Canada's all-time temperature record was broken on Sunday (June 27) in Lytton, British Columbia, with a high of 46.6C. "This smashed the previous record - normally when you break a record, it's by a small margin - this smashed the record by a full 1.6C," Ms. Nullis said.

Less than 24 hours later, Lytton broke the record again, this time measuring 47.9C, despite the fact that "it's in the province of British Columbia, it's to the

(Continued on page 13)

TOWN WATCH

DISCLAIMER: The following items are primarily drawn from first responders. Responders' accounts may not be their full activity range. Grand juries hand down indictments when evidence presented them warrant a trial. Named suspects/defendants are innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

NEWARK - Police here and in Brooklyn have been pooling their notes regarding their respectively vandalized George Floyd statues before June 24.

A Newark police squad car, with its service lights on, has been parked almost directly across the seated Floyd statue here at City Hall since June 25. Its posting came after a city cleaning crew had removed paint left on the 700 lb. statue.

An NPD sergeant discovered Floyd's face spray-painted black and "LIFE ... LIBERTY VICTORY PATRIOT-FRONT.US" lettered in white across his chest 6 a.m. June 24. The Southern Poverty Law Center and the NYPD have identified Patriot Front as among "white nationalist hate groups."

News of Floyd's bust being similarly vandalized at Brooklyn's Flatbush Avenue Junction at 7:20 a.m. Floyd's face was also painted black and "PATRIOTFRONT.US" stenciled in white on its base.

Both Stanley Watts and Chris Carnabuci's respective works were unveiled on or before the June 19 Juneteenth now-federal holiday. Both are intended to be exhibited at other city locations after July 1 or June 18, 2022. Both were defaced the early morning of a Hennepin County, Minn. judge sentencing Derek Chauvin, the former Minneapolis police officer convicted of killing Floyd, to a 22.5-year jail sentence.

They and Philadelphia's Floyd mural at North 5th and Olney streets June 4 bore Patriot Front lettering or stencils.

NYPD's Hate Crimes Task Force has released security camera images of four masked men,

one shaking a paint can, walking near the plaza at around 3:30 a.m. NPD, as of press time, has not given a description of its vandal(s).

IRVINGTON - The owners of the 11 cars that had burned in MTS Towing lot here June 17 may have received replies from their insurance carriers by now.

The ECPO Arson Squad, as a standard operating procedure, has been searching for the early-morning fire's cause once the blaze had been put out.

The first Irvington Fire Department units, responding to a 1:10 a.m. call that Thursday, found several cars afire at 480-500 Chancellor Ave. They pulled two more alarms, the latter bringing several Newark fire units to the scene. The fire was brought under control by 2:30 a.m.

EAST ORANGE - Funeral arrangements for former Councilwoman Sharon Fields have not been released as of press time.

Fields, who had died June 28, was a Fourth Ward Councilwoman for 10 years and a month 2005-15. She was first appointed to fill the resigned Zachary V. Turner's term in November 2005; (Turner had resigned to serve a sentence on a plea-bargained bribery charge.)

A majority of participating Fourth Ward voters predominantly elected Fields to her first full three-year term in 2007 and re-elected her in 2011. She chose not to run for the 2015 election.

Fields, in her 121 months in office, was Heath and Education Committee Chairwoman and had served on the Public Safety; Arts, Recreation and Cultural Affairs; and Housing, Licensing and Inspection committees. She was also on the city's parking authority and rent leveling boards of directors.

Prior to making the council dais, Fields was the administrative assistant to the Essex County Juvenile Detention Center Director among other positions in the county's social services. A City Hall announcement includes work as an aide to then-State Assemblywoman Shelia Y. Oliver, the Newark Board of education, the Seton Hall Law School and, while living in New York, an advertising agency.

"For many years, she was a

well-known political activist and community servant," said the City Hall announcement. "A nonsense, outspoken advocate with a heart of gold, the Hon. Sharon Fields will be missed."

ORANGE - It has become apparent that the 120-year-old building here at the southwest corner of Lincoln and Tremont avenues, regardless of future redevelopment, will be demolished in the near future.

It is to the understanding of "Local Talk" that a city department or board in late May or early June has "authorized" the demolition of the 2.5-story building at 595 Lincoln Ave.

595 Lincoln started life as the Tremont Avenue School in 1901. It became Tremont Middle School by the Orange School District later on until the new Orange High School opened Sept. 1, 1973.

The district, after combining Tremont and Central middle schools into the now-Orange Preparatory Academy/old OHS building, sold the property to the city. Orange's elders then moved its police department from City Hall's basement to there.

595 Lincoln served as Orange Police Headquarters until the current Freddie Polhill Law and Justice opened in 2000. The ex-school and ex-police station has been vacant, except for the enveloping ivy, ever since.

The City Council had bought back the property from 595 Lincoln Avenue Urban Renewal LLC on Dec. 1, 2020. The LLC and backer Chadwick Capital had a 2019 redevelopment agreement with Orange where the building would have been replaced by a 4.5-story, 60 market rate unit condominium and integral parking garage. "Lincoln Avenue Heights" was to open this summer.

Orange's administrators have since been looking for new developers for it and the former Orange Memorial Hospital site. The hospital property, unlike 595 Lincoln, is a nationally recognized historic district.

WEST ORANGE - What started out as a June 15 bicycle theft call here in the Watchung Heights neighborhood became a new way of going above and beyond the call for 15 West Orange Police Department officers by

June 22.

Township spokesman Joseph Fagan said that two WOPD officers had responded to a 12-year-old boy's report of the strongarm robbery of his bicycle along High Street at 8 p.m. June 15.

Officers took down the boy's description of the male and female who took away his bike and combed the nine-block street from Washington Street to the Montclair border. It was a matter of time, however, that apprehending the couple and recovering the bicycle was becoming remote.

WOPD Sgt. David Palmere noticed that while the bike owner was physically uninjured, but, in Fagan's phrasing, "experienced the trauma of having his bicycle taken from under him."

Palmere and 14 of his colleagues - including a fellow sergeant and a lieutenant - chipped in to buy a replacement bicycle plus a helmet and a lock. They presented them to the victim on or by June 22.

It is not known whether the stolen bicycle was previously registered with its Bike Index preventative program. It is presumed that the bicycle had been entered in WOPD's Stolen Bike Listings page and Stolen.BikeIndex.org.

SOUTH ORANGE / MAPLEWOOD - A tripled reward fund, a petition to rename the Underhill Sports Complex and questions over the sports complex's security are among a week of developments related to the search for Moussa Fofana's killer,

Former Mayor Fred Profeta, on June 27, said that the \$10,000 reward first posted by the Essex County Sheriff's Office CrimeStoppers have exceeded \$30,000. Another \$10,000 was added since Profeta donated \$10,000 of his own June 23.

Those who want to add to the reward fund may either enter Venmo's @FredProfeta (donors will be asked for "1108" for a phone number's last four digits) or make checks payable to Essex County CrimeStoppers: "Justice for Moussa."

Over 5,000 people, as of June 29, have meanwhile signed a petition to have the South Or-

(Continued on page 14)



From The Pastor's Heart

OP-ED BY DR. ROBERT KENNEDY

Praying For Wisdom

This past week, someone thought it important to send me another conspiracy theory about the Covid-19 vaccine. The claim is that it came from expert scientists and an outstanding pastor. I began to read and as soon as I realized what it was, I did what I have done to any such theory sent to me. I “can them” or “place them in file thirteen,” as the common sayings go.

I disposed of the email quickly because I am aware of the subtlety with which Satan is seeking to pull me in his game of deception, as he is doing to so many, with whom I am acquainted. So now I am praying for wisdom, as I have never prayed before. I am seeking the wisdom that comes from God, for I think the effort at Satanic deception is getting more intense every day.

I do not want to speak for everyone, but if we were to have a confessional service, some individuals might say, “we have all been deceived a time or two before, and the results have been devastating.” At the moment, my heart is going out for many of the people worldwide who are caught up in all of the conspiracy theories that are leading to their destruction. In my mind, I say that they deserve better, but they seem to have chosen ignorance over wisdom, thus facing the many problems that need not be.

Here is the central theme of this reflection. Even though you might think you are a rather wise person, quite knowledgeable about what is taking place globally, you need a higher, superior, heavenly, spiritual wisdom. You might be an expert in cybersecurity or any other social and scientific knowledge area, but there

needs to be a caution that says, do not be so arrogant that you do not seek counsel from others who are wiser than you are.

Remember the prophet Daniel, how he called his friends and together prayed for wisdom when Daniel was called to interpret Nebuchadnezzar’s dream (Daniel 2). Daniel sought the wisdom of God. Again, and again, we read about Jesus how he sought the wisdom of His Father. He even spent whole nights in prayer to get the wisdom from above. So do not allow the contemporary culture of self-trust to stop your prayer for wisdom. Our culture of self-trust has gotten us into enough trouble, so we need to look outside ourselves to the One who can help us discern what is false and what is right in the times in which we are living.

The apostle James tells us:

If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and He will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking. (James 1:5)

James also makes clear:

But the wisdom from above is first of all pure. It is also peace-loving, gentle at all times, and willing to yield to others. And, it is full of mercy and the fruit of good deeds. It shows no favoritism and is always sincere. (James 3:17, 18 KJV)

The man who collected and wrote the Bible Proverbs was profoundly wise, but he instructs us, in a wise mother's voice:

My child, listen to what I say and treasure my commands.

Tune your ears to wisdom, and concentrate on understanding.

Cry out for insight, and ask for understanding.)

Search for them as you would for silver,

seek them like hidden treasures.

Then you will understand what it means to fear the Lord,

and you will gain knowledge of God.

For the Lord grants wisdom! From His mouth come knowledge and understanding. (Proverbs 2:1-6 KJV).

I do not know your need, but on my prayer list for wisdom I include the eleven following components:

1. How to find and appreciate the truth
2. How to know the will of God in and for my life
3. How to make wise decisions
4. How to plan aright
5. How to speak wisely, especially when I am provoked
6. How to realize my failures and mistakes, and how to correct them
7. How to deal with the perplexities of the daily crisis about me
8. How to understand the word of God for my life and to share with others
9. How to discern the greatest needs around me
10. How to deal with difficult people and those who disagree with me
11. How to be effective in my work as a pastor.

Here are some words of wisdom from a great spiritual writer of the 19th century:

To parents as they seek to train their children:

:
If you lack wisdom, go to God; He has promised to give liberally. Pray much, and fervently, for divine aid. One rule cannot be followed in every case. The exercise of sanctified judgment is now needful. Be not hasty and agitated and approach your children with censure. Such a course would only cause rebellion in them. You should feel deeply over any wrong course you have taken, which may have opened a door for Satan to lead your children by his temptations. If you have not instructed them regarding the violation of the laws of health, blame rests upon you. You have neglected important duty, which result may

be seen in the wrong practices of your children. (CG 458.2)

To the church as to how to confront the world:

Peculiar and rapid changes will soon take place, and God's people are to be endowed with the Holy Spirit so that with heavenly wisdom, they may meet the emergencies of this age, and as far as possible, counteract the demoralizing movements of the world. If the church is not asleep, if the followers of Christ watch and pray, they may have light to comprehend and appreciate the movements of the enemy. (ChS 254.5)

To individual persons as they seek to deal with Spiritual warfare:

No man is safe for a day or an hour without prayer. Especially should we entreat the Lord for wisdom to understand His Word. Here are revealed the wiles of the tempter and the means by which he may be successfully resisted. Satan is an expert in quoting Scripture, placing his own interpretation upon passages, by which he hopes to cause us to stumble. We should study the Bible with humility of heart, never losing sight of our dependence upon God. While we must constantly guard against the devices of Satan, we should pray in faith continually: “Lead us not into temptation.” (DD 12.5)

I have said enough to encourage anyone who needs to practice praying for wisdom. Remember the assurance that if we lack wisdom, we need to ask God, for he has promised to give more than we can ask for or think to ask for. Let us seek it, for with God it is not in short supply. He does not close up his storehouse. He is not going into bankruptcy. No, he is not filing a chapter 11 or 13.

SPORTS WRAP



By William Hathaway, Jr.

Summer is upon us, and the summer league basketball leagues throughout Essex County at Montclair Immaculate started a couple of weeks ago in which local area teams participated. In the first game that was held on June 7th, it was Newark Central winning 58-35 against Newark East Side. In alter game, East Side bounced back and beat Ramsay 57-21.

In other local area sports events, the City of East Orange

will host the Harry James Youth Basketball Summer Basketball League from July 6th thru August 5th at the Elmwood basketball courts. There will be one boys 9-11 years old division, and another for those 12-14.

Also, the Essex County parks department hosted their annual fishing derby at Monty Irvin Park, and Orange youth and resident Makenna Moore caught the most fish. East Orange's Rashad Adams caught the most fish in his age group from the 1-5 category.

2022 BUDGET

(Continued from page 5)

ticipate in and benefit from. Together with the Legislature, we've achieved what they said was unachievable."

The budget allocates over \$4.2 billion to improve the State's long-term fiscal health and substantially reduce outstanding debt by setting aside \$3.7 billion for the Debt Defeasance and Prevention Fund Established through companion legislation. \$2.5 billion of this fund will go towards retiring State debt, which is expected to generate savings of over half a

billion dollars. The other \$1.2 billion will support capital construction that replaces current or future debt issuances.

The budget also includes a record total payment of \$6.9 billion to the State Pension Fund, which includes the full \$6.2 billion pension contribution for FY22 (including Lottery proceeds) and an additional \$505 million pre-payment towards subsequent years. The State had been on a 1/10 ramp up plan as it worked its way up to meeting the full Actuarially Required Contribution and was initially slated to contribute 90 percent of the full pension contribution this year.

WORLD NEWS

(Continued from page 10)

Rocky Mountains, the Glacier National Park, and yet we're seeing temperatures which are more typical of the Middle East or North Africa," Ms. Nullis continued.

Such extreme temperatures pose a major threat to people's health, agriculture and the environment "because the region is not used to such heat and many people do not have air conditioning," WMO said in a statement, before welcoming the fact that the authorities had issued a se-

ries of early weather warnings to limit the risk to those most vulnerable.

Citing Environment and Climate Change Canada meteorologist Armel Castellan, WMO said that higher temperatures would likely peak early this week on the coast and by the middle of the week for the interior of British Columbia; afterwards, the baking heat is expected to move east towards Alberta.

"Yukon and North West Territories have recorded their all-time highest temperatures not just in June, but any point in the year. We are setting records that

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In other sports news, Newark native and Seattle Mariners pitcher Hector Santiago became the first player suspended under Major League Baseball's crack-down on pitchers doctoring baseballs. Santiago, who played for

Bloomfield Tech while in high school, will be out of action for 10 games on his first offense. Also, Serena Williams had to withdraw from her first Wimbledon match due to an injury.

In February, the Governor proposed accelerating the "catch-up" plan and making the first full pension payment since FY 1996. The additional \$505 million pre-payment will offset the increase that was expected as result of the planned reduction in the assumed rate-of-return for FY 2023 and allow the State to make level pension contributions going forward. Combined, making the full payment and the pre-payment in FY 2022 will save the State more than \$1.5 billion over 30 years and put an end to years of unmet obligations and substantial growth in the unfunded liability.

The budget also includes significant direct appropriation investments, including \$200 million for the Offshore Wind Port and \$200 million for current Schools Development Authority (SDA) projects to reduce debt issuance; \$75 million for the SDA's Capital Maintenance and Emergent Needs Grant program; \$60 million to support the continuation of the Drinking Water and Clean Water Infrastructure Fund; and \$93.6 million for critical capital improvements, including emergent life safety and IT projects. These proposals will reduce the State's borrowing needs in the long-term.

CARIBBEAN

Migrants Sent Back to DR

An upsurge in deadly clashes between gangs in Haiti's capital, Port-au-Prince, has displaced more than 5,000 people since the beginning of the month, the United Nations said on June 10, citing preliminary estimates from its humanitarian agency, OCHA. People are fleeing to safer areas to stay with relatives, though many others, including children, are sleeping outside or

(Continued on page 15)

GURBIR GREWAL STEPPING DOWN AS NEW JERSEY ATTORNEY GENERAL

WASHINGTON D.C. - On June 29, the Securities and Exchange Commission announced that Gurbir S. Grewal has been appointed Director of the Division of Enforcement, effective July 26, 2021. Grewal currently serves as Attorney General for the State of New Jersey, a role he has held since January 2018, when he was confirmed by the New Jersey State Senate after being nominated by Governor Phil Murphy.

"I'm honored and delighted to welcome Attorney General Grewal to the SEC," said SEC Chair Gary Gensler. "He has had a distinguished career as New Jersey's chief law enforcement officer and as a prosecutor at both the local and federal levels. He has the ideal combination of experience, values, and leadership ability to helm the Enforcement Division at this critical time. I look forward to working closely with him to protect investors and root out wrongdoing in our markets."

"I thank Melissa Hodgman

for her service as the Enforcement Division's Acting Director," Chair Gensler added. "She will continue to be an important adviser to both Gurbir and me, and I look forward to our continued work together."

"The Enforcement Division has a critical role to play in finding and punishing violations of the law," said Grewal. "I'm excited to get to work with the talented team of public servants to uncover and prosecute misconduct and protect investors. I thank Governor Murphy for the opportunity to serve the people of New Jersey and all of the colleagues with whom I've had the pleasure to work during my career in the state."

As New Jersey's Attorney General, Grewal heads the Department of Law & Public Safety, which employs more than 3,700 uniformed officers, 750 lawyers, and thousands of additional public servants, including investigators, regulators, and administrative staff. Before becoming Attorney General, Grewal

served as Bergen County Prosecutor, the chief law enforcement office of New Jersey's most populous county.

"Through his efforts standing up to the Trump administration's attacks on New Jersey and our diverse communities, instituting historic reforms in policing, and leading the fight against gun violence, Attorney General Grewal has been an invaluable member of our administration and a dedicated public servant to the residents of New Jersey. Though we'll miss his leadership, I know he's the right person to protect investors all across the nation, and I congratulate SEC Chair Gensler for this outstanding selection," said NJ Gov. Phil Murphy on Grewal's appointment.

On June 30, Murphy announced that Andrew Bruck will serve as Acting Attorney General for the remainder of the Governor's four-year term. Bruck currently serves as First Assistant Attorney General and has been part of the executive leadership team at the Attorney

General's Office since January 2018.

Earlier in his career, he was an Assistant U.S. Attorney in the Criminal Division of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of New Jersey, where he served as Chief of the Economic Crimes Unit from 2014 to 2016 and oversaw the investigation and prosecution of all major white collar and cybercrimes in the District of New Jersey.

He also previously served as an AUSA in the Criminal Division of the United States Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of New York, where he was assigned to the Business and Securities Fraud Unit. Grewal worked in private practice from 1999-2004 and from 2008-2010.

Grewal graduated cum laude with a Bachelor of Science in Foreign Service from the Georgetown University School of Foreign Service in 1995. He obtained his law degree from the College of William & Mary, Marshall-Wythe School of Law in 1999.

TOWN WATCH

(Continued from page 11)

ange-Maplewood School District rename the Underhill complex after Moussa. The Columbia High School Cougars soccer player was killed, and a 17-year-old linebacker wounded by at least one of a group of assailants on that property 9:30 p.m. June 6.

Maplewood Police Chief Jim DeVaul, on June 24, said that Underhill's gates were unlocked, and its Lynn Profeta Field lights off June 6. DeVaul added that while recommending SOMSD to keep Underhill's "fence locked" when unused, his officers will patrol that property at the school district's request.

A second "Justice for Moussa" rally has been set for 6 p.m. June 30 at CHS's Ritzer Field. The rally will end with a march to Underhill.

BLOOMFIELD - A civil rights attorney has compared three newly released video footage of

a Nov. 9 attempted apprehension of an East Orange man and, as of June 22, said he does not like what he saw.

Michael Poreda, Esq., of Somerville, showed News12 New Jersey footage from a police officer's body camera, another officer's dashboard camera and from a witnesses' cell phone. These three clips, first available on the Bloomfield Information Project May 20, were compared to a civilian driver's 30-second Nov. 10 clip and four Bloomfield Police Department officers' incident reports.

The combined footage showed three BPD squad cars blocking the path of a Mercedes Benz along Bloomfield Avenue between Orange Road and Sherman Court. The Mercedes, driven by Jeffrey Sutton, 38, of East Orange, had a license plate identifying it as "wanted from East Orange". The BPD dispatcher, after learning that Sutton had 10 open arrest warrants including one for "aggravated assault," told responding officers to conduct "a felony traffic stop."

Four BPD personnel - one uniform officer, a uniform sergeant and two plainclothes officers - approached the car and ordered Sutton out; Three of the officers drew their guns; a fourth tried to smash the driver's side window with his club.

Sutton, who said he was fearful for his life, refused to obey and slowly backed into a squad car twice. The officers then fired five times, once striking Sutton's arm. Sutton moved forward and escaped east on Bloomfield into Orange, where he was eventually captured. He was then first taken in custody to Newark's University Hospital.

The footage showed that Sutton had not backed into the officers, nor had he struck another car - which were in the officers' reports. Their reports stated that Sutton had accelerated at them and had hit a second car at the scene.

The clips may also show that BPD officers' actions may violate the department's own use of force guidelines restricted to the "imminent danger of death or

bodily harm" or "no other means are available...to avert or eliminate the danger."

Sutton remains held in Newark's Essex County Correctional Facility on two counts of aggravated assault of a law enforcement officer among 17 other charges. Bloomfield Public Safety Director Samuel DeMaio said he "unfortunately" could not comment, given that the investigation is active with the ECPO.

MONTCLAIR - One of Montclair Public Schools has hired a third party to investigate a whistleblower's accusations of "years-long pattern of employee discrimination and criminal sabotage" during this summer.

"The investigation has started," said MPS Superintendent of Schools Dr. Jonathan Ponds, at the June 21 Board of Education meeting. "It'll be a thorough one, including paperwork and interviews."

Dr. Ponds' statement followed up his May 17 declaration that the 32-page "To Whom It
(Continued on page 15)

WORLD NEWS

(Continued from page 13)

in informal shelters.

The crew of Coast Guard Cutter Joseph Tezanos repatriated 38 migrants to the Dominican Republic June 25, following the interdiction of an illegal voyage in Mona Passage waters near Desecheo Island, Puerto Rico. The interdiction is the result of ongoing efforts by Caribbean Border Interagency Group (CBIG) partner agencies to combat illegal migrant smuggling.

The aircrew of a U.S. Customs and Border Protection maritime patrol aircraft detected the illegal voyage, approximately 15 nautical miles northwest of Desecheo Island, Puerto Rico. The Coast Guard Cutter Joseph

Tezanos responded to the sighting and interdicted the 35-foot vessel with the assistance of the cutter's small boat. The cutter's crew safely embarked the migrants from the makeshift vessel that was grossly overloaded and taking on water. A Puerto Rico Police Joint Forces of Rapid Action marine unit also responded and arrived on scene to assist.

Prior to embarking cutter Joseph Tezanos, the crew provided the migrants with lifejackets. Once aboard a Coast Guard cutter, the migrants receive food, water and basic medical attention.

"The strong partnerships, collaboration and efficient coordination between the Coast Guard and our CBIG and Dominican Republic navy partners helped save the lives of all

the migrants in this case and ensured their safe return to the Dominican Republic," said Capt. Gregory H. Magee, Commander of Coast Guard Sector San Juan.

"To anyone considering taking part in an illegal voyage, don't take to the sea! These voyages are extremely dangerous, the vessels are unseaworthy and most often grossly overloaded. Additionally, they have no life-saving equipment and the conditions onboard are inhumane."

Cutter Joseph Tezanos later rendezvoused with a Dominican Republic Navy vessel just off Punta Cana, Dominican Republic, where the crew transferred and completed the repatriation of the migrants to Dominican Republic Navy authorities.

TOWN WATCH

(Continued from page 14)

May Concern" letter submitted by MPS Buildings and Grounds Supervisor Robert H. Kelley IV April 11.

Kelley alleges that MPS custodial staff were subjected to "racist and sexist treatment, bullying and sabotage" meant to undermine employees who supervisors considered disloyal. MPS "employees have lied to state investigators" and "have refused to deal with urgent maintenance issues."

Kelley asserts that the train of the above events happened from 2018 up to MPS' April 12 reopening for hybrid learning. The foregoing has led to "students being put at unnecessary risk from asbestos, rodents, extreme cold and heat and other hazards at buildings throughout the district."

In his letter, Kelley placed current Buildings and Grounds Director Anthony Bispo and Business Administrator Emidio D'Andrea plus two former employees at the center of his allegations.

Kelley's letter got the attention of Madison Public Schools, which has started its own investigation of its Facilities Director, John Eschmann, May 14. Eschmann was Montclair B&G Director before moving to Madison in August 2020. Madison School Superintendent Mark Schwarz, refraining from commenting on personnel matters, did not say whether Eschmann was placed on leave since May 14.

BELLEVILLE - The Belleville Public Schools has its \$1.2 Million Dollar Man in Superintendent Dr. Richjard D. Tomko - and some procedural questions left unanswered - as of July 1.

The Belleville Board of Education Trustees, in a -1-1 split vote on June 21, approved a \$1.2 million contract with Dr. Tomko over the next five school years, or

\$240,000 a year, through June 30, 2026.

Tomko's fourth contract since his 2015 appointment replaces his July 19, 2019 - June 30, 2024 agreement, where he was paid a base \$996,615 over those five school years. His previous salary may have topped out at \$1,041,158 had he qualified for a \$31,033 merit pay bonus plus \$11,010 in high school stipends and a \$2,500 stipend towards completing his doctorate.

Why the Trustees and Dr. Tomko agreed to replace his fourth contract two years into its life remains unanswered. Some observers prior to and at the public Belleville High School auditorium had a more immediate question: why was the new contract posted some 20 minutes before the session's scheduled 7 p.m. start?

Dr. Tomko, at the meeting, told an editor that some contract details were negotiated right up to the last minute. The posted 20-page new contract, however, has a June 16 cover letter from Interim Essex County Superintendent of Schools Joseph Zarra, approving the contract as falling within N.J. Department of Education guidelines.

Dr. Tomko's contract was approved June 21 with Trustee Frank Velez the sole dissenter and Trustee Luis Muniz being absent.

Tomko, in his BPS website biography, has been credited with filling a \$4.2 million deficit early in his seven years' superintendence and attaining \$4 million in state aid for preschool expansion. The Sparta resident was named 2020-21 Essex County Superintendent; BPS, in 2019 was deemed by NJDOE as "A High Performing District." Tomko meanwhile received his Doctor of Philosophy with Educational Leadership, management and Policy concentration, from Seton Hall.

NUTLEY - The early morning June 24 car rollover on a Route 21 South exit here left its two occupants, one of whom was seriously injured, in custody.

Clifton police, said that city's Detective Lt. Robert Bracken, alerted their Nutley colleagues of the 2017 Audi A7 they were pursuing on Route 21 into township limits after midnight that Thursday. Its officers said they began chasing the Audi when it had sped away from a Lexington Avenue traffic stop. The luxury sedan's driver had switched off its lights during the pursuit.

That chase was over a moment later when the A7 clipped a curb on the exit ramp and overturned. CPD officers captured that man - identified Kashaun Hutson, 24, of Brooklyn -- the next moment on a Nutley street. He remains held in Paterson's Passaic County Jail on eluding, resisting arrest and obstruction.

CPD also arrested its passenger, who was still in the luxury sedan, and called for a Nutley Fire Department Rescue Squad ambulance. Chester Cherry, 25, of Brooklyn, is to be charged with obstruction when he has been sufficiently held and released from Paterson's St. Joseph Regional Medical Center.

CPD, said Bracken, was on a DUI enforcement checkpoint when its two officers said they had stopped the Audi on a traffic violation.



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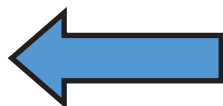
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